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The Fifty Years Between 1857 and 1907, and Beyond

AN ADDRESS

At the University of North Carolina, June 3, 1907, on the
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY of the Graduation
OF THE CLASS OF 1857.

By COL. BINGHAM,
CLASS ORATOR.

Col. Bingham was introduced by Col. Thomas S. Kenan, Class President, in the following language:

Col. Robert Bingham, the youngest survivor of the class of 1857, has been chosen to represent the class today. The School which the Bingham, from grandfather to grandson, have administered since 1793, conducted in Middle North Carolina for ninety-nine years and located on the Asheville Plateau since 1891, is the oldest one in the South, and is the only school in the United States which has been conducted by the same family so as to touch three centuries. It touched the waning years of the eighteenth century, it continued through the waxing and waning years of the nineteenth century and has attained its greatest vigor and expansion in the waxing years of the twentieth century.

The continuous connection of the Bingham with this University is longer than that of any other family in the United States with any other university in the United States, except that of the Adamses with Harvard. It began with the grandfather of the present Headmaster, who was Professor of ancient languages in the University in 1800. It continued with his son, William James Bingham, the School's second Headmaster, who graduated with first distinction in 1825 and declined to accept a professorship in the University because he considered the School his vocation. It continued with William Bingham, the School's third Headmaster, who graduated in 1856 with first distinction, and died in 1873. Robert Bingham, its fourth Headmaster, graduated with first distinction in 1857, and has administered the School as its fourth Headmaster since 1873, having declined a professorship in the University because, like his father, he considered the School his vocation.

When the War between the Sections broke out, he went to the front and surrendered with General Lee's 7,892 armed men at Appomattox Court House. After the war ended he resumed his place in the school, his partnership and his share of the school's income, after paying a substitute, having been kept intact for him by his father and brother during his whole absence.

His son Robert, who was in the University in 1889-90-91, taught in the School for four years, and may feel it his duty to leave the Law and become its fifth Headmaster if there shall be need. Robert's son Robert, the third of the name, and of the fifth generation from the School's founder, is already in strenuous training as the School's sixth Headmaster, and the three Robert Bingham, father, son and grandson, are with us here today. It is most fitting, therefore, that Robert Bingham should represent the class of 1857 at the fiftieth anniversary of our graduation.

Colonel Bingham, who on rising, was received with loud applause, spoke as follows:

I.

It would be interesting and instructive on an occasion like this to deal in reminiscences; but with things more vital to say, I shall confine myself to but one reminiscence, which I refer to because it contrasts the educational conditions of to-day and of 50 years ago very sharply.

In 1853, when the class of 1857 matriculated, there was not a single University West or South of the University of North Carolina. Now there are about 30 Universities, and Universities so-called in the state of Tennessee, more than 30 in the state of Texas, and according to the statistics of the late Prof. Baskerville of Vanderbilt University, there are more Universities and Universities so-called in the Southern states than in all the rest of the English speaking world.

Up to 1875, 80 years after its foundation, this University had never created a President for itself, and in 1853, when we matriculated, only one of the full Professors was an alumnus of the University, and only one was of Southern birth. All the others were Northern men from Northern colleges, except one, and he was an Englishman. In 1853 the University had only about 200 North Carolina students; Davidson only 100 in all; Wake Forest about the same number, and Trinity was founded only in 1853. Now this University has 680 North Carolina students, and our Denominational Colleges aggregate more than 1,000 North Carolina students, an increase of about 300 per cent for the University and of more than 500 per cent for the Denominational Colleges, and the State's A. & M. College, presided over by an alumnus and ex-president of the University, an impossible conception in 1853, has about 500 North Carolina students.

In 1853 very few, if any, men of North Carolina training were sought as teachers anywhere, and we ourselves imported Northern men from Northern colleges as presidents and professors in our University and in our institutions of learning, both for our young men and our young women, very much as we imported our dry goods and notions from the North.

When a North Carolinian was called for in 1833 to succeed President Caldwell, of New Jersey and a graduate of Princeton, the politicians determined to "shelve" David L. Swain, their most dangerous rival for the United States senate,

by making him President of the University. He was a man of great natural gifts, and had risen more rapidly than any other politician had ever done in the state before, or than any one has ever done since, though he had but little training of any school and but two months' training of any college, and the United States Senate, his greatest ambition, seemed easily within his grasp. But a combination of the other less successful politicians against him sent one of his rivals to the Senate and made him President of the University.

One of the humorists of those days said of the new President, that North Carolina had been very kind to her "favorite son." She had sent him to the House of Commons; she had sent him to the State Senate; she had made him Solicitor; she had made him a Judge; she had sent him to Congress; she had made him Governor, all in twelve years, and now she had sent him to the University to be educated. Think of making a University President on such a basis *now*.

But of late universities and colleges conferring degrees in 27 states of the Union and in three foreign countries have come to North Carolina for presidents and professors. This University has created three Presidents for itself, one for the University of Texas, one for Tulane and one for the University of Virginia. This University has furnished 157 presidents and professors to universities and colleges; Davidson since its foundation in 1837, has furnished 80; Wake Forest, since its foundation in 1838, has furnished 104; Trinity, since its foundation in 1853, has furnished 75; and these North Carolina-bred Presidents and Professors, 416 in all, and enough not recorded to carry the number to 450, have carried our North Carolina standard of culture to Alabama, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin, and across the seas to Brazil, China and Japan.

II.

On the 4th of June, just 50 years ago, the Class of 1857 entered life in a period of profound peace; but it was the ominous stillness which precedes the earthquake. By June, 1861, seventy-five thousand (75,000) men had been ordered out to quell an insurrection in the Southern States in "Ninety Days." By June, 1865, three million four hundred thousand (3,400,000) men had met in deadly conflict on more than 2,200 stricken fields, and a radiant, but unstable civilization had been swept away.

Every member of the class of 1857 was in the Confederate Army.

How few of them are here today! How few of the absent ones are still in the land of life! How many have gone the way of all the earth! Of the 69 men

with the dew of youth upon them who took their diplomas here 50 years ago, only 15 remain; all the others "have passed over to the silent majority through the gates which open only outward," and now,

"Their place in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills
Is that their graves are green;"

for,

"The moss-clad marbles rest
On the friends we loved the best,
In their bloom;
And the names we loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb."

And, alas! no friendly marble marks the nameless graves of some who fell in battle. Of more than one it might be said:

"We buried him darkly at the dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning
By the struggling moonbeams' misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

"No useless coffin enclosed his breast;
Not in sheet nor shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

"Sadly and slowly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, we raised not a stone,
But left him alone in his glory."

And some did not have even this much of a soldier's burial, but, "with the dew on their brows and the rust on their mail," they lay unburied where they fell, with no eye to look on them save the pitiless sun by day and the pitiful moon and stars by night, and there they remained till,

"Lost all human trace, each went away
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod which the rude swain
Turns with his share and treads upon."

We who remain "to meet with and greet with" each other are like the sailors of Aeneas's ships after the storm, raised "by the vindictive hate of cruel Juno." "Rari nantes in gurgite vasto," a few survivors still afloat on the great deep which has engulfed so many.

For us who survive it is a great pleasure and a great privilege to meet here again to-day. We look out on a world almost as new as the New World Columbus saw from the deck of the Pinta 500 years ago. Old things have passed

away. The old theories, the old methods, the old ideals, the old means of communication, of lighting, of heating, of transportation, and, most of all, the Old South of our childhood, youth and earliest manhood, are all "gone like yesterday." And much that is gone we are not unwilling to have buried out of our sight, as we are not unwilling to have the dead body of a friend, however dear, buried out of sight when his time has come to pass from mortal vision. But it is a wonderful privilege to have lived during the half century since 1857, the half century of greater wars, of greater inventions, of greater scientific and material progress, of greater industrial expansion, of greater conquest of nature by man than in all the centuries combined from the Christian era to the day we graduated 50 years ago.

III.

And in these 50 years, during which we have seen so much, have shared in so much, have suffered so much, have done each his part in achieving so much the **POLITICAL** changes have been as notable, as unexpected, and in some things as inconceivable from any past experience as the **MATERIAL** changes have been. We, ourselves, have seen four of the six acts of **SECESSION** in which the United States Government has been involved by land and sea, five of them with armed men.

The first and second **ACTS** of **SECESSION**, the **SECESSION** of the Colonies from Great Britain and the **SECESSION** from "The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, (which lasted only 13 years), into **THE CONSTITUTION**, as we know it, were before our time; but the United States was born of the first secession, maintained by a war lasting seven years. The second secession occurred without armed men.

The third **SECESSION**, (which was sustained by the armies and navies of the United States), was the secession of Texas from Mexico; and as the existence of the United States was won by arms through the first secession, the Pacific slope was won by arms through the third secession, and this made us an inter-oceanic power, the indispensable prerequisite to our ever becoming a great world power. As our interoceanic position was won through the third secession, our insular possessions in the Atlantic and in the Pacific were won by arms through a fifth **SECESSION**, that of Cuba from Spain; and through the sixth **SECESSION**, that of Panama from the United States of South America, which was supported by the presence of our armed men, the possession of the Isthmian Canal was achieved, an acquisition going hand in hand with the possession of the Pacific coast in importance. All these **ACTS OF SECESSION**, except the second, which was bloodless, were carried to successful terminations for the sessionists by the armed support of the United States.

Washington, who led the first secession, was branded a rebel and a traitor by the anti-sessionists of that day; and if the secession of 1776 had failed, he would doubtless have been executed as a traitor. But the revolutionary patriots "hung together lest they should hang separately," as Dr. Franklin put it, till they succeeded through the intervention of France, as the secession of Texas, of Cuba, and of Panama succeeded through the intervention of the United States.

Looking backward we must be filled with wonder that the **FOURTH SECESSION**, that of the Southern from the Northern States, could ever have occurred at all.

It was as illogical to contend for a unity on the basis of disunity at will afterwards as for a marriage on the basis of divorce at will afterwards. Moreover it was a case of Shakespeare's "Very Midsummer Madness," for ONE man without money, without credit, without arms, without ships, without machine shops, without the skilled labor to produce any of these indispensable appliances of war, to undertake to fight FIVE men supplied with all the appliances of war themselves, and able to command them from the whole world, and with twenty-five hundred miles of coast line from the capes of Virginia to Brownsville, Texas, but without a ship, without a fort, without a sailor and with only one foundry where a gun could be cast!

And yet this FOURTH SECESSION was legal and constitutional, according to the compact of 1789; it was in accordance with the instruction given at West Point to General Lee and President Davis and the other Confederate leaders from Rawle's View of the Constitution. This United States government textbook taught that the Union was dissoluble and that if it should be dissolved, allegiance to it ceased and reverted to the States which created it. Our withdrawal from the Union was in accordance with the claim made repeatedly and continuously by New England up to 1850 that the right to withdraw from the Union was an inalienable right of a state. And it is one of the strangest anomalies of history that the people of the South, who seceded most unwisely, we admit, but nevertheless in strict accordance with the original compact, should be vilified as rebels and traitors for doing what the people of the North had been claiming steadily as an inalienable right till after the Mexican War; and that their secession, plainly within their constitutional rights should have been suppressed by a government which, itself born of our first secession, had sustained a second and third secession before 1861 and which has sustained two secessions since 1865. We protest against our legal withdrawal from the Union being called rebellion.

"Rebellion, foul, dishonoring word,
Whose wrongful blight so oft has stained
The noblest cause that tongue or sword
Of mortal ever lost or gained."

We protest against having our children and grandchildren taught from histories, written by our military antagonists and by our sectional and our political enemies, that their fathers were rebels and traitors, when our National Capital bears the name and perpetuates the fame of the "secessionist," "rebel" and "traitor," George Washington, and when Abraham Lincoln, in his famous Thanksgiving proclamation of November, 1863, which ranks among the greatest state papers among men, spoke of the War between the Sections, not as a rebellion, but as "THE LAMENTABLE CIVIL STRIFE IN WHICH WE ARE UNAVOIDABLY ENGAGED." It is an historical fact that Jefferson Davis was not tried for treason, because, under several States' Rights decisions by Chief Justice Chase before he became Chief Justice, and under the States' Rights instruction received at West

Point from Rawle on the Constitution, which was to be put in evidence if the trial had occurred, he could not have been convicted.

And when at the beginning of a great war Robert E. Lee subordinated his loyalty to the flag under which he had served so long and with such distinction to his sense of duty to his native state, when he stopped his ears to the call of ambition from the strong and opened them to the cry of help from the weak; when he refused to accept the command of the United States armies, the highest possible ambition of a professional soldier, and took a subordinate and precarious position offered to him by the state of Virginia, he set an example of self-sacrifice and devotion to duty for duty's sake unequalled in the history of soldiers and of armies since time began.

IV.

And in these 50 years since 1857 we have lived under many governments, each inconceivable to those who administered its predecessor. Before 1861 we lived under the government of the United States, a condition inconceivable to the colonists before their secession from the mother country, and so for all the other changes of government during this astounding half century just behind us. After North Carolina seceded, we lived in the independent republic of North Carolina, one of the thirteen republics acknowledged by Great Britain in 1783. Then we lived in the Southern Confederacy. When the sword decided that we, and the fathers, and New England up to 1850 were all wrong, that the teachings of the United States government at West Point were false and that the Union had never been dissolved and could never be dissolved, the victors dissolved a union which they had themselves declared indissoluble; a third of the states of this inseparable union were declared to be out of the union, were treated as conquered provinces and we lived under a military despotism, contrary of the decision of the sword of 1865, contrary to the constitution and contrary to all the traditions and antecedents of the English-speaking race since the military despotism of William the Bastard; and we are still out of the union as far as any effective share in the administration of the National Government is concerned.

Then we lived in the Africanized South, the most inconceivable government among men, according to all the precedents of all the past, when for the first time since the beginning of time a white race undertook to put the feet of a colored race on the necks of the men and women of their own blood and breed.

With the clearer vision and better perspective of a foreigner, the celebrated English historian, Lecky, in his "Democracy and Liberty," characterizes this reconstruction period as a "grotesque parody of government, a hideous orgy of anarchy, violence, unrestrained corruption, undisguised, ostentatious, insulting robbery, such as the world had scarcely ever seen." Then we lived in the de-Africanized South, and each man of the class of 1857, who survived the war, did

his part to de-Africanize the South. Then we lived in the re-Uniting States. After the Spanish war we began to live in the United States, and since the acquisition of the Panama belt, we have lived in National America. There is no parallel among civilized men to these rapid and continuous changes of government under which the people of the South have lived since 1857, except in the 25 different governments of France during the last 125 years.

V.

But among all these changes of government during these 50 most eventful years, our intense instinct of LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT has never changed. As long as the South had any share in national politics, American statesmen were pure and patriotic, American politics were clean, graft was practically unknown, and the government was a government OF the people, BY the people and FOR the people.

But since the people of the Southern States have been excluded from all share in National politics, the great republic of the west has drifted away more and more from the basic principles of local self-government. By tariff legislation for the Classes and pension legislation for the Masses (from which the South has been mercifully delivered), the fallacy that the government must support the people has been *enthroned* and the sound Democratic doctrine of the fathers of the republic that the people must support the government has been *dethroned*; and instead of a democracy, the United States Government, as administered by leaders from the Northern states since 1865, has become the most pronounced plutocracy on earth, in which a few men, protected by legislation in their own interests, have heaped up fortunes in comparison with which Croesus and Crassus were paupers. Moreover, this vicious tendency is fostered in the Northern states by the fact that with the very large infusion of foreign blood, the intense instinct of local self-government has been largely bred out. In the Central West, according to the Census of 1900, one inhabitant in every five is of foreign birth. In the South as a whole, only one in one hundred and twenty-five is of foreign birth; and so with the phenomenal increase of wealth and luxury, which in all ages has been accompanied by a decline of civic virtue and righteousness, a government OF the plutocrat, BY the plutocrat, and FOR the plutocrat has displaced a government of the people, by the people and for the people, and graft stalks rampant.

Of all the changes during the last 50 years, this is perhaps the most notable, and it is the most malign and the most ominous. But there are not only seven thousand, but seven million, in the South who have not bowed their knees to this Baal. We fought a terrific war, not for slavery, not for secession, but for the right of LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT, and this intensest instinct of the man of Anglo-Saxon blood and breed is more emphasized and intensified in the South today than anywhere else where God's sun shines. In the face of the fearful compression, suppression, repression, depression and OPPRESSION of the reconstruction period, in the face of the hostile army kept on a war footing against us for years after 1865, in the face of hostile North outnumbering us five to one, in the face of the enfranchised negroes at home, instigated by hostile carpetbaggers,

in the face of our abject poverty at the end of the war, every state in the South has regained its local autonomy; we have quadrupled the cotton crop and have entered upon a period of financial and industrial wealth, expansion and power inconceivable in 1857, and never before attained by any conquered people in so short a time.

And when the time comes for the plutocrats and the autocratic bosses to be dethroned and for a government of the people, by the people and for the people to be enthroned again, as come it must, unless the American Republic is to go the way of all the republics of the past, the conservative men of both sections, who esteem patriotism above greed and democracy above plutocracy, will work cordially together again, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, hand to hand as of yore; but the lion-like leaders of this reformation, if it can be a reformation, and of this REVOLUTION, if it must be a REVOLUTION, must come from the South again, as in the days of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and Marshall, who made the nation at first; for it is in the South where the lion-like leaders of local self-government have been born, bred and nourished, and where the conditions since 1865 have kept them in the most strenuous training. And then the sceptre will return to the South again, and the law-giver will be between our feet again as of yore; for all things come to those who wait and who keep pure and grow strong while they wait.

The "Clan Alpine Fiery Cross" of local self-government was handed down to the fathers of our fathers' fathers from the forest of Germany. It summoned our ancestors to arms against the Plantaganets at Runnymede, against a foreign ecclesiastic master in the days of the Armada and Queen Elizabeth, against the Stuarts in the days of Cromwell, against the House of Brunswick in 1776. This same fiery cross of local self-government summoned the people of the Southern States to arms in 1861, and we bore it aloft in defense of our local rights till we were overwhelmed by numbers in "the imminent, deadly breach."

But the fiery cross was still all aflame, and against odds seemingly much more overwhelming than when

"Cannon to right of us,
Cannon to left of us,
Cannon in front of us
Volleyed and thundered,"

we bore it aloft again till we regained what we had lost in the "imminent, deadly breach," and every Southern state again governs itself locally.

And it becomes us to hand down the Clan Alpine Fiery Cross of Local Self-Government, all aflame, to our children, to their children and to the children of their children's children.

"The muster place is Lanric mead.
Speed forth the signal, Clansman, speed."

VI.

But, before closing, I wish to deliver a brief and most urgent message from the outgoing to the incoming generation of University men, and to lay a most imperative duty upon you. OUR faces are turned toward the West and the evening star; YOURS toward the morning star and the sunrise. The last 50 years were committed to US; the next 50 years are committed to YOU. We regained our lost local autonomy against overwhelming odds, and that is basic; but the blood and pressure left us too narrow, and too sectional. You must maintain what we have attained, for the State as a State, for the South as the South; but you must regain the NATIONAL spirit which sectionalism at the North and sectionalism at the South has obscured, and which it has destroyed in many cases; and sectionalism, whether at the North or at the South, has always been, and as long as it exists will continue to be a menace to the greatness, power and glory of National America; for NATIONAL AMERICA is the only America of the future. Southern men created the Nation at first. Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence; Washington won that independence; Madison, more than any other man, created the constitution and secured its adoption; Marshall interpreted it, and these were all Virginians. Of the fifteen presidents before 1861, nine were from the South; they occupied the presidential chair 48 years, two-thirds of the time, and five of them were re-elected. Northern presidents occupied the chair but 24 years, only one-third of the time, and no one of them was re-elected. But it was left to two sons of this University to produce a greater national and international effect than ever has been produced by any graduate of any other university in the United States. President Polk, who graduated here in 1818, added the Pacific coast to our domain and made us an interoceanic power, a thing of incalculable importance to our national and international life. William A. Graham, who graduated here in 1824, with the consent of President Fillmore and Daniel Webster, Secretary of State (which was refused at first and afterwards very reluctantly granted), as Secretary of the Navy, opened Japan, a thing, with its actual and possible results, of incalculable national and international importance. Why shall not a broad and national spirit expel the narrow and sectional spirit which prevails, too much, in the South, a spirit, which has dwarfed our statesmen so that the Nation, as a Nation, has no need for them because the Nation thinks them unfit? What Southern man is there whom the whole Nation would think fit to be President or Vice-President unless he should leave the South and make name and fame in a Northern State? The evil spirit of sectional America whether in the North or in the South, must be exorcised. The national spirit of Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Marshall of Virginia, Polk and Graham of North Carolina, must be restored; and young men, why may not some of you aspire to those highest National positions so often occupied by the Southern men in the past? Why shall not each of you do his part to weld a New South, a New North, a New West, a New East into the NEW NATIONAL AMERICA of the future, which is becoming so great, so strong and so glorious in the present, and which will become still greater and still stronger and still more glorious in the degree in which we all become more unitedly animated with the spirit of National Americans?

VII.

Survivors of the class of 1857, I know of no better description of our past since our graduation fifty years ago, and of no better inspiration for so much of the future as many remain to us than in Tennyson's Ulysses, of which Carlisle said when he read it, "Behold a great poet has come with a great poem." Ulysses had returned to his kingdom of "rockbound Ithica" in safety after all his wanderings and hardships and dangers by land and sea, and had won the right to pass the evening of his days in peace and rest. But he craved life and action. Peace and rest palled on him. He must needs seek the sea again. He says:

"It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
I mete and dole unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel; I will drink
Life to the lees. All times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those
That loved me and alone; on shore and when
Through scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea. I am become a name;
[And so have *we* become a name].
For always roaming with a hungry heart,
Much have I seen and known—cities of men,
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honored of them all—
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of lofty Troy.
[And so have we drunk delight of battle],
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch where through
Gleams that untraveled world whose margin fades
Forever and forever as I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life,
Were all too little; and of life to me
Little remains; but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence; something more;
A bringer of new things. And vile it were
For some few suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

My son Telemachus, to whom I leave
 The sceptre and the isle, will pay meet adoration to
 My household gods when I am gone. He works
 His work! I mine; and I must put to sea.
 There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail;
 There gloom the dark, broad seas. My mariners,
 Souls that have toiled and wrought and thought with me—
 That ever with a frolic welcome took
 The thunder and the sunshine and opposed
 Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
 Old age has yet his honor and his toil.
 Death closes all; but something ere the end,
 Some work of noble note may yet be done
 Not unbecoming men who strove with gods.
 The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;
 The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs; the Deep
 Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
 Push off and sitting well in order,
 Smite the sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
 To sail beyond the sunset and the baths
 Of all the western stars until I die.
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles
 And see the great Achilles whom we knew.
 [And we would say,
 And see great Robert Lee whom we all knew].
 Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
 We have not now that strength which in old days
 Moved Earth and Heaven, yet what we are, we are,
 One equal temper of heroic hearts
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will,
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."
 Comrades of the class of 1857, "Rari nantes in gurgite vasto,"
 Survivors still afloat on the great deep which has engulfed so many, why shall
 we not
 "Sail beyond the sunset and the baths
 Of all the western stars" into that longest day
 Where shines the midnight sun, and there abide,
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield,
 Until that longest day shall wane; until that long abiding sun
 Shall sink beneath those winter seas;
 Until the quiet night envelopes all.

